

Message Text

SECRET

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63

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

OMB-01 IGA-02 AID-05 SAJ-01 MC-02 ACDA-05 EB-07

TRSE-00 /098 W

----- 033911

R 261236Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5302

INFO AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY DOHA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY MUSCAT

AMEMBASSY SANA

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

SECDEF WASHDC

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

CINCUSNAVEUR LONDON UK

COMIDEASTFOR

S E C R E T TEHRAN 0785

KUWAIT POUCH BAGHDAD

E.O.11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR BA

SUBJ: REGIONAL SUPPORT FOR MIDEASTFOR

REF: STATE 017267 (DTG 230403Z JAN 76), MANAMA 076 (DTG 241034Z JAN 76), 75 TEHRAN 6630 (DTG 101213Z JUL 75) (NOTAL), SECDEF 201646Z JAN 76) (NOTAL)

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1. WE DO NOT THINK GOI VIEW OF MIDEASTFOR PRESENCE AT BAHRAIN

HAS UNDERGONE ANY SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE IN RECENT MONTHS (75 TEHRAN 6630 (DTG 101213Z JUL 75). SHAH'S REMARKS TO BUSINESS WEEK QUOTED STATE 017267 (DTG 230403Z JAN 76), ARE STANDARD, ALMOST AUTOMATIC, IRANIAN ANSWER TO QUERIES ABOUT U.S. PRESENCE IN PERSIAN GULF OR INDIAN OCEAN. DESPITE FAILURE TO REACH REGIONAL SECURITY PACT WITH GULF STATES AND DISTRUST OF CONTINUED IRAQI MILITARY TIES TO USSR, IRAN WOULD BE LOATH TO SEPARATE ITSELF FROM ARAB NEIGHBORS BY TAKING A PUBLIC STAND ALONE IN FAVOR OF PROLONGED MIDEASTFOR PRESENCE.

2. IN INTERVIEW WITH JOHN COOLEY OF CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR JANUARY 23, SHAH WAS ASKED HOW HE FELT ABOUT U.S. NAVY STAYING IN GULF AT BAHRAIN. QUESTION FOLLOWED DISCUSSION OF INCREASED SOVIET AND CUBAN ACTIVITIES IN AREA. SHAH REPLIED, "I DON'T THINK THAT THERE IS ANY REAL SIGNIFICANCE IN THAT--ONLY TO SHOW THE FLAG. BUT YOU CAN SHOW THE FLAG ONCE IN AWHILE BY SENDING IN A FEW SHIPS. YOU HAVE ONLY ONE OR TWO LITTLE TIN BOATS THERE."

3. IT IS POSSIBLE THAT SHARPNESS OF SHAH'S REPLY DERIVED AT LEAST IN PART FROM CURRENT USG-GOI DIFFERENCES OVER DEFENSE ISSUES. IRANIAN GRIEVANCES WITH U.S. OVER HIGHER EQUIPMENT COSTS AND PROBLEM OF AGENT FEES FOCUS PRINCIPALLY ON TWO PROGRAMS MANAGED BY U.S. NAVY, I.E., SPRUANCE SHIPS AND GRUMMAN F-14 SALE. WHEREAS IN PAST SHAH WAS HIGHLY PLEASED BY USN COOPERATION AND ASSISTANCE, GOI HAS HAD TOUGH WORDS IN RECENT MONTHS FOR NAVY MANAGEMENT OF SPRUANCE AND GRUMMAN PROGRAMS. IN THIS CONTEXT IT IS SIGNIFICANT THAT GENERAL TOUFANIAN ASKED DURING RECENT VISIT TO WASHINGTON, " WHY SHOULD YOU FORCE A GOVERNMENT WHICH WAS FIRST IN THE REGION TO OPENLY SUPPORT THE U.S. BASE IN DIEGO GARCIA TO CHANGE ITS DEFENSE POLICY?" ((SECDEF 201646Z JAN 76). ACCORDINGLY, WE DOUBT THAT GOI WOULD BE IN A MOOD TO CONSIDER BACKING U.S. POSITION ON BAHRAIN PUBLICLY WITHOUT COMPENSATING EFFORT ON OUR PART TO RESOLVE CURRENT PROBLEMS OF HIGHER PRICES AND AGENT FEES.

MIKLOS

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